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MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subj: Quarantine operations (U)

1. Situation. Our quarantine was imposed on 23 October to stop importation of offensive weapons into Cuba and this quarantine has not subsequently been lifted. However, ships on station have been directed to hail ships bound for Cuba, but not to board them. Because of this declaration, sixteen Block ships reversed course and returned to the Soviet Union and no ships with suspicious cargoes attempted to pass the quarantine line.
2. We now have sixteen Soviet ships and one East German ship headed for Cuba. The East German ship and ^{TWELVE} ~~sixteen~~ Soviet ships are cargo ships and thus could carry suspicious cargo below decks. Two of these Soviet ships, the OKHOTSK and the ORENBURG, are ships with 72 foot hatches, capable of carrying missiles below deck.
3. Requirements. If the quarantine is to remain effective, to continue to insure that offensive weapons are not imported into Cuba, it will be necessary to visit and search Block and Free World ships which could be carrying offensive weapons. This particularly applies to the Soviet ships with large hatches, the OKHOTSK and the ORENBURG. OKHOTSK's estimated arrival at the quarantine line is 16 November, ORENBURG 17 November.

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In view of the lapse of time since a Block cargo ship has transited the quarantine line, it should be made known that we still intend to enforce the quarantine by search when necessary. This could be accomplished by announcing that we had boarded a ship enroute to Cuba. On 12 November, the Norwegian ship TRAJAN enroute to Cuba was boarded by USS PERRY. While this ship was boarded at the request of the master, this fact should not be announced.

4. It would next be desirable to board a Free World non-Block chartered ship enroute to Cuba. This will be done if time permits.
5. We should next board and search a Block (non-Soviet) ship. The most likely candidate seems to be the Yugoslav tanker IZ, due at the quarantine line 14 November.
6. The next step should be to visit and search each of the Soviet cargo ships as they arrive at the quarantine line. The first one will be the ATARSK, which is due at the quarantine line 15 November, and the second one will be the OKHOTSK, which is due 16 November. It is especially important that the OKHOTSK be searched, since she has the 72 foot hatches.
7. Recommendation. It is recommended that visit and search as outlined above be authorized and that news releases be made, couched in language which indicates the search is continuing, announcing that the TRAJAN has been boarded and then others as the event occurs.

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